

REMARKS

Claims 19-20 were examined in the Office Action mailed May 8, 2007, with claims 21-36 standing withdrawn pursuant to Election/Restriction Requirement. New claim 37 is added by this amendment, as discussed further below. Thus, claims 19-20 and 37 are currently pending.

The following objections and rejections are currently pending:

- The Abstract stands objected to for use of the language “The invention relates to”, “means” and “said”.
- Claims 19-20 stand object to for informalities.
- Claim 19 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,099,758 to Hassler, *et al.* (“Hassler”).
- Claims 20 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Hassler in view of Japanese Patent Publication No. 11-198354 (“Yamada”).

The following responds to each of the objections and rejections.

1. **The Abstract Has Been Amended.** The Applicants have amended the Abstract to address the pending objections. Withdrawal of the pending Abstract objections is respectfully requested.

2. **The Claim Objections Have Been Addressed.** The Applicants have amended claim 19 to provide a transitional phrase, and to otherwise conform the claim to U.S. practice. Withdrawal of the pending claim rejections is respectfully requested.

3. **Claims 19-20 Are Patentable Over Hassler and/or Yamada.** The Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 19 as anticipated by Hassler and of claim 20 as unpatentable over Hassler and Yamada, on the

grounds that these references fail to disclose or suggest all of the features of the present invention recited in these claims.

The invention recited in claim 19 is a method for cleaning a screen stencil of a screen printing device in which, *inter alia*, a bottom of the screen stencil is wetted with a cleaning agent and a paper web is used in an intermediate printing with a squeegee being run over the screen stencil. In order to make clear that the cleaning paper is not the same as the media used to create the silk screen printed products, the Applicants have further amended claim 19 to clarify that “said paper web is different from a media to be printed on in regular printing on the screen printing device.” In addition, new claim 37 has been added to recite that the cleaning agent is present on the bottom of the screen stencil when the intermediate printing to the paper web is performed.

The Hassler reference has been cited as disclosing the invention recited in claim 19. As a first matter, the Applicants note that Hassler teaches cleaning its stencil 8 in a manner which *avoids* application of cleaning agent to its product media 42. As shown in Hassler Fig. 7a, the cleaning body 23 is provided at a location remote from the point at which ink is applied to the product media 42, and *the cleaning agent is recovered within the cleaning body 23*. Hassler at 10:32-59 (“The cleaning medium 27 [sic, 22] is collected in a space 30 and carried away by passage 31 and a duct 32 likewise formed in the cleaning body 23 ...”). Hassler therefore does not disclose the present invention’s wetting of the bottom of a screen stencil before an intermediate cleaning step using an intermediate paper web.

As a separate grounds for allowance of claim 19 over Hassler, the Applicants note that Hassler provides no disclosure or suggestion of claim 19's use of an intermediate paper web for screen stencil cleaning in an intermediate screen stencil cleaning method. The Office Action maintains that the Hassler product web 42 is the recited paper web used for screen stencil cleaning in the intermediate printing step. May 8, 2007 Office Action at 4. The Hassler specification makes clear, however, that the media 42 is the product that receives the silk screened image from the spray nozzles 4 Hassler at 1:7-20 (describing various product media); at 7:23-9 (description of ink application to media 42 to create the silk screen image). Hassler therefore fails to disclose or suggest claim 19's use of an intermediate cleaning step using a cleaning agent and an intermediate paper web (and further, the intermediate paper web being "different from a media to be printed on in regular printing on the screen printing device"). Claim 19 is therefore patentable under § 102(b) over the Hassler reference for this additional reason.

As to the rejection of claim 20, the Yamada reference is cited as teaching claim 20's wetting by a cylinder or brush immersed in a cleaning or wetting agent. Because Yamada does not teach or suggest the claimed intermediate cleaning steps, it does not cure the deficiencies of Hassler, and thus no combination of these references can teach or suggest the invention recited in claim 20. Claim 20 therefore is patentable over these references under § 103(a).

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and withdrawal of the pending § 102(b) and § 103(a) rejections is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

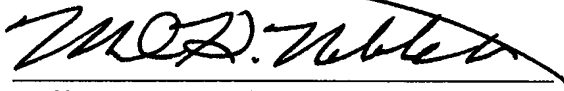
In view of the foregoing, the Applicants submit that claims 19-20 and 37 are in condition for allowance. Early and favorable consideration, and issuance of a Notice of Allowance for these claims is respectfully requested.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #100412.56347US).

Respectfully submitted,

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Jeffrey D. Sanok
Registration No. 32,169
Mark H. Neblett
Registration No. 42,028

CROWELL & MORING LLP
Intellectual Property Group
P.O. Box 14300
Washington, DC 20044-4300
Telephone No.: (202) 624-2500
Facsimile No.: (202) 628-8844
JDS:MHN:tas
#3914408